

# CHCS

## Local Winners

### 1st grade

Gracie Russell, Ann Cooper Parrish, Lucy Chunn, and Poppy Stewart.

### 2nd grade

Eleanor McCool, Mary Ryan Cain, Beau McBride, John Stewart, and John Landon Hood.

### 3rd grade

Shep Engle, Luke Horne, Charlie Edwards, Emery Taylor, Wes Durff, Chance Webster, Trae Land, and Ollie Mitchell.

### 4th grade

Harper Chunn, Leah McClellan, Klausen Killebrew, and Noah Carnathan.

### 5th grade

Emma Nutt, Mitchell Word, Reese Walbert, and Hollie McLellan.

### 6th grade

Chancellor Sims-Dumas, Brock Lawshe, Mary Kellum Ables, and Maddie Rodgers.

### District Winners These winners advanced to State Reading Fair

Beau McBride, Mary Ryan Cain, Ollie Mitchell, Charlie Edwards, MK Ables.

# Everyday Mysteries, Solved

Why Do You Cry When You Cut Onions?

There's no need to cry over spilled milk, but what about chopped onions? You can thank a chemical combination of enzymes and sulfur for the tears that well up while you make dinner. Onions use sulfur to make a mixture of amino acids and enzymes during the growing process. The acids and enzymes are separated and stored in different regions of the onion's cells, which are called vacuoles. While the onion remains whole, the amino acids and enzymes in the onion's cells remain separated. Once you cut into the onion, however, everything mixes together. When the two substances are combined, they form a chemical known as syn-Propanethial-S-oxide, or lachrymatory factor (LF). LF is an irritant that's easily vaporized when it reacts with the air.

LF isn't strong enough to affect tougher parts of your body such as your skin, but it can irritate more sensitive regions. As the vapors waft up toward your face, your eyes will begin to sting. Your body — sensing the irritant — will release a torrent of tears in an attempt to wash the chemicals from your eyes. Luckily, LF can't do any serious damage, even in high quantities.

Producing LF is the onion's way of defending against anything that may want to eat it. As soon as an animal bites into the root, its eyes start to burn and it's reminded to stay away from onions. Unfortunately for onions, humans are persistent.

Why Do Cats "Make Biscuits"?

A nursing kitten often presses its mom's belly with its front paws; this kneading action stimulates the flow of milk. But many full-grown cats continue the behavior, "making biscuits" on pillows, soft blankets, towels,

# Mississippi: The Diamond State, with wins in baseball and softball at all levels

Mississippi Today by Rick Cleveland

If Mississippi ever decides to move away from from its official nickname — The Magnolia State — here's a suggestion: The Diamond State.

No, we don't produce diamonds — not the gemstone kind. We lack the ancient volcanic structures required to form and bring natural diamonds to the surface. We do specialize in diamonds, the baseball and softball kind. Our diamonds produce

terrific baseball and softball players and therefore teams that often go elsewhere and win championships.

Banner season for baseball

This has been a banner spring. I am going to try not to leave out anyone, but probably will. There's so much. Herewith a recounting:

•Look at the national Division I baseball rankings heading into this weekend's NCAA regionals. All three of the state's largest universities are ranked in the D1 Baseball top 20 with Southern Miss at No.7, Mississippi State at No. 17 and Ole Miss at No. 18. No other state has that many. Only Texas and Florida, with much larger populations and far more colleges, have as many as two. Ole Miss and State already have won national championships this decade and Southern Miss has now been to 10 straight

NCAA Tournaments. Only Florida (18) has been to more.

•Special mention here to Southern Miss, which recently won both the Sun Belt regular season and tournament championships and now has a record of 44-15, marking the 10th straight season the Golden Eagles have won at least 40 games. No other NCAA Division I baseball program in the country has done that. And USM does it with less. Of the 16 college teams hosting regionals, 15 have athletic budgets of more than \$100 million — most much, much more. Southern Miss operates on about \$30 million a year.

•Special mention also Hattiesburg, which is home to two outstanding college baseball programs: USM and William Carey University (41-18), one of only two undefeated teams remaining in the NAIA World Series being played at Lewiston, Idaho. The Crusaders have won their first three World Series games and play Taylor University (Indiana) Thursday night. Little wonder, Hattiesburg has two nicknames now: the Hub City and Baseburg.

•Mississippi's baseball excellence is not limited to four-year schools. Pearl River Community College, down in Poplarville, is fast becoming the Los Angeles Dodgers of junior college baseball. The Wildcats (48-11), down 4-1 after seven innings, rallied for a 6-5 victory over Madison College (Wisconsin) Wednesday night. The Wildcats have now won their first two games of the DII Junior College World Series at Enid, Oklahoma. Pearl River, under Coach Mike

Avalon, won the national championship in 2022.

Success in softball It's not just baseball, either. Mississippi's softball excellence has become a thing. Witness:

•Mississippi State has come seemingly out of nowhere in this postseason to win an NCAA Regional in Oregon and a Super Regional at Oklahoma. The Bulldogs lost 8-0 to Texas Tech on Thursday in the NCAA Softball World Series at Oklahoma City. Ole Miss' softball team advanced to the finals an NCAA Regional this season, finally losing to Texas Tech, the powerhouse team State plays first.

•Belhaven University lost to Trine University (Indiana) 7-5 Thursday in the NCAA D-III World Series at Salem University in Virginia. The Blazers won a Super Regional last week in Jackson. The Blazers (42-10) are making their second World Series appearance over the past three seasons.

•William Carey plays softball, too, and plays it very well. The Crusaders finished the season 41-14 with a roster chock-full of Mississippi natives. They won the Southern States Conference and made it to the championship game of the NAIA opening round tournament, losing by one run.

•Pearl River plays softball, too. Boy, do they play softball. Pearl River won the junior college national championship at Boiling Springs, North Carolina, on Monday night, defeating Des Moines Area Community College 2-1 in the championship game. The Wildcats won five straight games in the national tournament under Coach Christie Meeks. Anna Grace Garcia, the winning pitcher in four of those five victories, was the World Series MVP.

Updates, 5/28/2026 and 5/29/2026: This article has been updated to show Mississippi State lost to Texas Tech and Belhaven lost to Trine on Thursday in softball.

or their owners. Veterinarians think adult cats knead when they're feeling safe and relaxed and to show affection to humans and other cats. The act of kneading can also calm cats, like a form of feline self-care. Making biscuits may also be a sign that a cat is marking its territory with the scent glands located between its toes.

Are Sweet Potatoes Really Potatoes?

Sweet potatoes and common potatoes share part of a name, but the two are entirely different plants — and sweet potatoes aren't even potatoes. Sweet potatoes belong to the Convolvulaceae family, a group of flowering plants that's also called the morning glory family. Potatoes belong to the nightshade (Solanaceae) family, and are cousins to peppers, tomatoes, and eggplants. Both species get their name from an Indigenous Caribbean term, batata, which eventually morphed into the English "potato." By the 1740s, "sweet" was added

to the orange-fleshed tuber's name to differentiate the two root crops.

Then there are yams. Although they're often served interchangeably with sweet potatoes, this third root crop is biologically unrelated to either sweet potatoes or common potatoes. These tubers belong to the Dioscoreacea family, a group of flowering plants usually cultivated in tropical areas. Luckily, you don't have to know their scientific classification to distinguish between the two non-spuds at the grocery store: Sweet potatoes have tapered ends and relatively smooth skin, while true yams are generally larger with rough bark and a more cylindrical shape. At most U.S. grocery stores, what you're seeing labeled as a yam is probably actually a sweet potato.

## \*A Night

(Continued from page 1.) to create opportunities and positive outcomes for local youth and families.

"This event is about celebrating the people who continuously pour into our community without expecting recognition," said representatives of the Lexington Unit. "Holmes County is filled with unsung heroes, and A Night at the Oscars allows us to publicly thank them for their service, sacrifice, and commitment."

Funds raised during the event will help support programs and services offered through the Lexington Unit, including academic success initiatives, leadership development, mentoring programs, recreational activities, and character-building

opportunities for youth throughout the area.

Over the past nine years, "A Night at the Oscars in Holmes County" has grown into one of the community's signature events, serving as both a celebration of excellence and a reminder of the power of service and collaboration. The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Mississippi Delta continues its mission of inspiring and enabling young people to realize their full potential as productive, caring, and responsible citizens.

Community members and supporters left the event inspired and encouraged, reminded that even in challenging times, dedicated individuals continue to make Holmes County a place of hope, opportunity, and progress.

**HOLMES COUNTY  
TAX ASSESSOR/COLLECTOR  
JOB ANNOUNCEMENT**

**DEPUTY COLLECTOR**

The **Holmes County Tax Assessor/Collector Linda Rollins** is taking applications for a qualified, detail-oriented individual for the position of Deputy Collector. Responsibilities include good customer service, filing, and various office duties.

**Qualifications:** High School Diploma and knowledge of computers.

Please bring a resume to Linda Rollins, 22323 Depot Street, Lexington, MS 39095. Deadline for accepting applications will taken until Monday, June 15, 2026.

**Holmes County Tax Assessor/Collector is an Equal Opportunity Employer.**

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